1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
AF16

178 change. Thus much of the sweeping change that occurred in city life under comparable pressures did not occur in the peasant villages.

221 527 The main economic and social unit of the village is the family, and a special study is devoted to that subject. Here we should sketch the rhythm of village life and something of its annual cycle of activity.

The New Year holiday, for the people of China the first fifteen days of the year, is the main period of leisure for the villagers. Food is prepared in advance, and even the women may rest from their cooking during the first days of the holiday. The village is decorated with nien-hua (New Year's pictures) and ch'un-lien (paired New Year's Day mottoes). Visiting friends, and relatives, gambling, eating the best food of the year, wearing the best clothes, and indulging the children make this the most festive period in the year. For many families it is the only time in the year when they can afford to eat meat dishes. The special dishes of the season vary from province to province. In the northern provinces chiao-tzu (meat dumplings) and other wheat-based elaborate dishes are particular favorites; as one moves south, rice-based delicacies such as nien-kao (year cakes) figure more prominently in the New Year's feasts. Besides being a time of celebration, the New Year is also the time for settling accounts; for many

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
AF16

farmers there will be little left for celebration when the creditors have been dealt with.

In the rice lands of the Southwest the most intensive work of the agricultural year begins immediately after the New Year. At that time the farmer harvests his winter crops -- usually rape and wheat sometimes supplemented with winter beans and peas. Right after the New Year, often before the winter harvest, the farmer sets out his rice plants in nursery beds near the farmhouse. Then he removes his winter crop stubble and plows and prepares the fields for the young rice plants. He spreads fertilizer over the land and then breaches the dike and allows the irrigation water to flow in. After the desired water level is reached the field is harrowed again and again; then begins the back-breaking work of transplanting the rice shoots from the nursery beds to the flooded fields. The farmer has an easier life during the ripening of the grain. As the grain ripens, the fields dry, and at last it is harvest time. The harvesting and threshing are done with primitive implements, and many hands are required; straw is carefully

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
AF16

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The farm year, toilsome everywhere in China, is punctuated by other activities and festivals which relieve some of the monotony of the long seasons of work. The first of the annual festivals after the New Year is that of Ch'ing-ming, which corresponds in time to the Western Easter. Like Easter, the Ch'ing-ming observance was once a spring fertility festival. At this time, the ties of the living and dead members of the family and clan are celebrated; the family or clan graveyard is swept and food offerings are made to the dead. The performance of these duties is often the occasion for a family picnic at the graveyard. All relatives make special efforts to join in this annual celebration of family solidarity, and the outing is a pleasant relief from winter and indoor work.[6]

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4. (continued) landlord-tenant relations in the Southwest which involve the ethnic minorities, see chapter on Ethnic Minorities.

5. J.L. Buck's study of 16,786 farms showed that 39 per cent of these were in debt in the period 1929-32. Cited in Olga Lang, Chinese Family and Society, New Haven, 1946, p. 69.

6. Wolfram Eberhard, Chinese Festivals, New York, 1942, pp. 113-127. Cf. the full description of this festival observance in Yunnan in 1942 by Francis Hsü in Under the Ancestors' Shadow, New York, 1948, pp. 178-82.

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196 On the fifth day of the fifth lunar month is the Dragon Boat Festival. This is of southern origin and is traced by Eberhard to the human sacrificial rites of the Tai aborigines of south China.[7] In modern times it has been somewhat less popular in the north than in the south. It is in the south that the dragon boat races were held on rivers and lakes. For most rural families the festival meant somewhat better food than usual and particularly the steamed rice dumplings known as tsung-tzu, symbolic of the rice sacrifices made on this occasion to the shade of Ch'ü Yüan -- ancient statesman and poet of the feudal state of Ch'u.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh moon, usually in late August, is the feast of souls, the primitive origin of which has been transmuted by Buddhist belief and symbolism. It is at once a festival for the souls of one's ancestors and a community salute to the dead. Ancestral graves are cleared, sacrifices of food are made, and paper replicas of desirable objects are burned. As a further salute to the dead, lantern-lit boats are floated on some

7. Eberhard, op. cit., pp. 69-96.

1;Stanford U, S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
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• 527 796 body of water, to symbolize the community's concern that all the dead may be guided to the "other shore" -- a Buddhist metaphor for salvation. Many persons pay visits to nearby temples and pay for masses for the souls of the dead, particularly for the souls of the people in the community who died without descendants to commemorate their passing. At this festival, too, special food is prepared for the dead and for the living, and the farmers and their families enjoy leisure and conviviality.[8]

The mid-autumn festival is primarily a moon festival, and the ceremonies in honor of the moon carried out at moon-rise on this autumn night are full of the symbols of fertility and longevity. In modern times it has been mainly a festival of women, and the Old Man in the Moon is sacrificed to as the one who arranges all marriages on earth. The moon cakes, in the shape of the full moon, are one of the special delicacies of this season. This too was perhaps originally a fertility festival, and in some areas it is a popular time to make pilgrimages to nearby mountains.[9]

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8. Eberhard, op. cit., pp. 129-33.
9. Ibid., pp. 97-112.

527 These are the festivals that have
796 retained the most significance for the Chinese farmer into modern times. Many of them have changed drastically through time, and we shall shortly see that the Chinese Communists are greatly altering the meaning and symbolism of those few which have been allowed to survive.

585 In addition to the annual festivals, the farmer's life of toil may be relieved by ceremonial family events. For a family with resources or the ability to borrow them, a wedding meant a great feast and ample wine; even the poorest families often went heavily into debt to make a marriage ceremony festive. Practical jokes were played on the bridegroom, traditional songs were sung, and the guests, particularly the men, thoroughly enjoyed themselves.[10] The births of male children were often celebrated as were the betrothals and other milestones of family and individual life.

527 In modern times the government of the Republic of China decreed certain national holidays, but these were little observed by the farm villages.

536 In addition to these occasions for

10. For a description of wedding celebrations in Yunnan in the 1940's cf. Hsü, op. cit., pp. 93-98.

369 the surrounding farm-villages and also served
632 as market towns where the peasant might sell his crop and purchase the manufactured goods he could not produce.

511 Town life for the average artisan was as meager as for his relatives in the village. Long hours, hard work, low pay, few holidays wer the lot of most, and living conditions were generally poorer and more crowded than those in the villages. Proprietors of many shops required their employees to live on the premises, so that they seldom visited their families. The diet of the town dweller was as poor as that of the poor farmer -- mostly cereals, vegetables, and some condiments, and meat
527 and fruit on holidays only. Brief holidays were allowed at the New Year, the Ch'ing-ming Festival, the mid-Autumn festival, and the Dragon Boat festival. On these occasions, townspeople usually tried to return to their villages; if this was impossible they enjoyed such delicacies as they could afford and strolled the streets, perhaps visiting friends and attending seasonal fairs and theaters.

369 Life in the towns was, then, closely
361 linked with village life. But in the cities and provincial capitals, such as Kunming, Chungking, Chengtu, life in some respects has been greatly altered by the modernization that spread slowly from the

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
~~AF16~~ AF16

361 coastal to the inland cities. The streets are
369 sometimes paved, and schools, newspapers, motion pictures, and radio make the people more aware of the outside world than are their cousins in the towns and villages. In Shanghai and other modern cities, major industries built large dormitories for workers, labor unions and political clubs developed as new foci for society activity. World War II brought a measure of industrial life to the Southwest. Yet the living conditions grew worse as workers
161 moved into the cities. Crowding reached un-
361 believable proportions. The figures for Chengtu suggest the dimensions of this problem in all urban centers. Chengtu, with predominately one-storied buildings, had a population density of 50,000 per square mile as compared to 22,500 per square mile in New
[446] York City.[13] One survey suggests that workers in the newer industries were somewhat better off than workers in the traditional trades,[14] but their traditional holidays were shortened without, in most cases, the introduction of a
369 six-day week. In the crowded cities the festivals
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13. Winfield, op. cit., p. 88. These figures would seem to be for the period 1945-47.

14. Lang, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

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527 of the agricultural year continued to determine the holidays (although national holidays were increasingly observed), and, like the town dwellers, city workers tried to return to their family villages for at least one of the 575 holidays. Another link to one's native place was the system of clubs composed of those city-dwellers who had a common provincial origin; the clubs operated hostels and sometimes made arrangements for mutual-aid. Secret societies provided another focus of social life, particularly in the towns and cities. Their rituals, passports, and secret signs of greeting were all subordinate to their basic aim, which was to provide members with security-through-association and a refuge against the hazards of a disintegrating and increasingly predatory society.

369 It will be noted that the ties of kinship and custom were strong, extending even into the large modern cities and the farm towns. The urban and rural ways of life tended increasingly to diverge, yet one of the strongest cohesive forces of all was the common set of attitudes and values which, even when change has been accounted for, held together all Chinese of village and town and city.

1:Stanford U. S-4,; 5 1956 AF16 SW China
AF16

668 involved in a community work project directed by the local cadre.

668 527 Settlement of accounts before the New Year holiday now means payment of taxes and the sale to the government of most of the balance of the farmer's grain, for which he receives coupons. The cadres carry this out at the village level.[22] The New Year festival itself is characterized by some traditional activities, modified to promote government aims, and by some new features. The peasant may buy New Year's pictures to decorate his house, but they will probably be romanticized portraits of Mao and other Communist heroes rather than the colorful deities of former days.[23] He may decorate his gate with paired mottoes, but the mottoes will no longer carry the old wishes for long life, happiness, and wealth, but exhortations to conform to Communist [525] standards.[24] The government may allow some additional food for the season, but gambling is forbidden, and social life has been so thoroughly organized that it can no longer be restricted to family and friends. 668 536 The peasants have been urged to organize their

22. SCMP 979, F b. 2, 1955, p. 30.

23. Enlightenment Daily, Jan. 23, 1955, p. 2.

24. Cf. the collection of mottoes in Hua-nan T'ung-shu [South China Almanac], Canton, 1953, p. 32.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China AF16
AF16

as a celebration of kinship ties and family continuity. Although we have no data, it is safe to assume that the elaborate festival calendar of "West Town," Hunan, described by Hsü, has been severely reduced by "anti-superstition" campaigns and other work of the cadres.[28] The next approved traditional holiday is the Dragon Boat festival in June. The boat races have been revived, and the poet Ch'ü Yüan, now a "people's hero, martyred in protest against a corrupt feudal regime," is the focus of celebrations.[29] The moon festival in autumn is also celebrated with extra food allowances and "cultural" activities. The various anniversaries of the Chinese Communists and of the world Communist movement probably do not break into the agricultural working year, but may be the occasion for special propaganda arranged by the local cadre. It will be seen that the pattern of living in the villages has been drastically altered; what remains of the old pattern consists of elements too deeply ingrained to be abruptly condemned without precipitating a crisis, useful to the Communists in the interest of morale, or adaptable in the promotion of their rural program of change and indoctrinatic

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28. Cf. Hsü, op. cit., pp. 22-24.
29. SCMP, 1075, June 23, 1955, p. 25.

632 668 townsman, more than the peasant, is open to an "around the clock" propaganda barrage. From the first call to early morning calisthenics, the radio blares in every street until late at night. There is pressure to join sports groups, study groups -- all with their ideological purposes. The major Communist holidays are celebrated in the cities with great parades and with endless speeches. Privacy and the chance to be at ease with family or friends are rare.

668 527 The New Year's holiday has some of its old gaiety, although subject to the same restrictions imposed on the peasant. The cities receive special shipments of seasonal delicacies, they appear to do at the mid-autumn and Dragon Boat festivals, and trips back to the family village may be possible for a minority of the urban population.[32] New Year's activities in 1955 suggest the way in which

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32. Enlightenment Daily, Jan. 23, 1955, p. 2. In preparation for the New Year exodus from the cities in 1955, the Ministry of Railways estimated that "over three and half million more people will travel than on normal days, mostly to join in united family celebrations of the holiday." NCNA dispatch, Jan. 19, 1955; SCMP, 972, Jan. 20, 1955, p. 21.

1:Stanford U, S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
~~AF16~~ AF16

668 all public celebrations of the festival are made
●527 to serve the Communist purpose. It was reported that, in the coastal area, traditional merrymaking was combined "with strict vigilance and celebration of the Yikiangshan (I-chiang-shan) Island liberation." In Foochow, special exhibitions on the theme "Taiwan Must be Liberated" drew large crowds. In the Amoy area and along the Chekiang coast, people called on units of the armed forces in their neighborhood "to bring them gifts and thank them for their efforts in national defense." In Shanghai, 40,000 spectators watched military teams play football, and Red Army song and dance troupes performed at thirty factories.[33]

668 The cities have been cleaned up and
[653] enlarged, large sections of old city walls
369 such as those of Chengtu have been destroyed, and building has apparently proceeded rapidly, although improvements in housing probably mainly affect the industrial workers, the favored class in the drive for industrialization.[34]

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33. NCNA dispatch, Jan. 27, 1955, 976, Jan. 28, 1955, p. 15. In all such activities one should remember that the cadre is instigator and manager. We do not have details on activities in the Southwest. We would expect them to be similar in outline, less elaborate in form.

34. Rostow, op. cit., p. 160.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
AF16

733 non-existent" in Communist China and the
735 number of vagrants had been greatly reduced.[28]
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V. CHILD WELFARE

527 Following the international practice of
746 dedicating one day in the year to the children, in 1931 April 4th was promulgated as China's Children's Day by the Nationalist Government. But the Chinese Communist regime changed this date to June 1st, in accordance with a decision made by the International Democratic Women's Federation in 1949 at Moscow.[29] Children's Day as it is celebrated in the United States and in Great Britain was branded as capitalistic, i.e., not designed for the well-being of the children of the laboring classes. Around June 1st every year, all the propaganda media are mobilized for the promotion of child welfare, praise of the happy state of children in Communist China and in the Communist bloc of nations, and references to the "plight" of children in the free world. And it is also around this time in most large cities on the Mainland of China that health examinations for

28. People's Handbook, 1955, pp. 211-13.

29. Hung Hsin-t'ao, Chi-nien Chieh-jih Shih-shih Tzu-liao [History of the Memorial Days], Shanghai, T'ai-lien ch'u-pan she, 1953, Vol. II, pp. 180-83.

1:Stanford U, S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
AF16

527 746 children are conducted. In the period 1950-52, according to one report, more than 1,000,000 children received a health examination.[30]

In the Southwest, in Chungking, on Children's Day 1953, more than 33,000 children gathered at the "Working People's Cultural Palace." Entertainment and games were on the day's program, as well as speeches by the mayor and vice-mayor of the city. In eleven other cultural centers" in the municipality of Chungking on that same day, special motion pictures for children were shown. The New China Bookstore opened its new department for children, and on the first day a sale of more than 3,700 children's books was reported.[31]

746 668 The first conference of the workers in women's and children's welfare was convened October 3-12, 1951, under the aegis of the All-China Democratic Women's Federation. With national production as the over-all purpose, the scope of their welfare work was described as to serve the masses of working

30. New China Daily, May 30, 1953, p. 3.
31. Ibid., June 2, 1953, p. 1.

Even before the beginning of the present war, West Town had always had its share of outside influence through sons of the local families who went away to study in Peiping, Shanghai, Hongkong, Indo-China and even Japan and the United States. But in the hands of the locals these returned young persons were helpless in innovation. The tale is still vivid of a young returner from Hongkong having had a bucket of human stools poured over his head and that of his newly-wed while walking on the street hand in hand. In the custom of the locality such liberty was not allowed and the young couple had no redress of the rough treatment. Four years of war have made West Town somewhat different in appearance. There is a missionary college from Central China, which has taken refuge in a Confucian Temple and a Buddhist Temple just outside the center of the town. The students are mainly from provinces other than Yunnan, and the faculty and staff members consist of English and American missionaries besides Chinese. With these outsiders come freer relations between the sexes, preachings of their church, their wireless news, their medical care, their manner of dress, etc. Besides the church in this missionary college there are two other churches. One of the latter is supported by the American Episcopal Mission and the other by the theological seminary which is a guest institution to the college. A third group of people who call themselves "The Little Flock" also has considerable activity. This group sends out preachers to fraternize with the local people.

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The Normal Habits of the People

The Yearly Cycle of Observances and Festivals - Spirits and gods are the main source of protection from any trouble for practically all of the people. Therefore, the yearly cycle of life is largely a yearly cycle, according to the lunnar calendar, of offerings to the spirits of gods. The following table shows the major ritual observances during the year:

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Lunar Month	Date	Name of the Occasion
1st	1st	Spring Festival. Incense burned and food offered to the Gods of Wealth and the Goddess of Kuan Yin
"	9th	Birthday of Yu Hwang
"	15th	" " T'ien Kuan
2nd	3rd	" " Wen Ch'ang
"	8th	Ritual parade of Buddha through the town
"	15th	Birthday of Lao Chun
"	19th	" " Kuan Yin
3rd	3rd	" " Hsuan Ti
"	Ch'ing Ming	Visiting ancestral graveyards
"	15th	Birthday of the God of Wealth
"	16th	" " " " " Mountains
"	20th	" " " Goddess of Niang Niang
"	28th	" " Ong Tuoh
4th	8th	" " Tai Tze
"	15th	" " God of Fire
"	20th	" " Yuan Shih
5th	5th	Tuan Wu Festival
6th	6th	Birthday of the Southern Dipper (Nan Tou)
"	24th	" " Military Sages
7th	7th	" " K'uei Hsing
"	14th	Ancestor Worship
"	15th	Birthday of the God of Earth

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Lunar Month	Date	Name of the Occasion
7th	19th	Birthday of the God of Pao Miao
8th	1st	" " Chin Chia
"	3rd	" " The Kitchen God
"	15th	The Moon Festival (Mid-Autumn Festival)
"	27th	Birthday of Confucius
9th	9th	" " Tou Mu
10th	15th	" " the God of Water
10th	(Some time)	Visiting ancestral graveyards
11th	19th	Birthday of Sun God
12th	8th	" " Pa Ch'a
"	23rd	The God of Kitchen reports to Heaven
"	30th	New Year Eve. Offerings to various gods.

Each of the above is an occasion of more less festivity in the form of offerings and feasting among those gathered in a small area of the town or from the entire village. These gatherings may either be purely male or female. In addition there are other occasions of more or less ritual significance. Scattered over the entire area are many temples of local patron gods (Pen Chu). Each of these gods governs the welfare of an area or of a village, has a surname, name, and birthday, such as the third of the first Moon, the 14th and 19th of the 4th Moon, etc. Each of these birthdays is an occasion of offerings, celebration and feasting at the temple for people of the area in which the particular patron god governs. On the first and fifteenth days of every month incense and food will be offered to these gods too. Then, three days after the birth of a child incense and food will be offered to these gods. On any day when a family is slaughtering a pig, incense will also be burned on family portals. Often a family calls in a priest to pray and read the scriptures for a day. This is called a Prayer for Blessing (peacefulness) and is performed on a small altar just outside of the family wall, in the street.

There are other occasions of emergency, as when a member of a family is seriously ill. On such occasions ritual offerings are usually made to one or other of the gods following advice given by a witch woman or a fortune teller. Finally, death of a family member brings with it, of course, many occasions of ritual significance.(4)

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Living Habits as regards Cleanliness. - There is no idea of personal hygiene or of public health as the West understands these terms. Personal habits of the people are like those in most other villages in China: drinking of unboiled water, eating exposed and uncooked food and raw vegetables, considering flies on food as a matter of course,(5) and taking no bath. Passing through West Town and its villages are many brooks formed by water running down from the gorges of Ta'an Shan. Usually on one or both sides of every street there are such streams. Each stream thus passes through many villages before finally reaching the lake. Such streams are the main places for washing not only rice and vegetables, meat and fish before cooking but also of clothes and night soil containers. Once the wife of a friend of the author

(4) The author does not think that the above list exhausts the total number of ritual occasions for inhabitants of this community. Walking through the streets during any evening the author would see at least several clusters of burning incense and ashes of burned paper money for spirits. The ones given are however the major occasions.

(5) Flies on food are called "food flies" without which a meal is regarded as improper.

5: Davies G-5 (1894-1900) 1909 AF16 Southwest China AF16

133 and can draw a good map with a stick on the ground, the
823 Chinese should be so lacking in this faculty, and will give one all sorts of geographical information which is obviously incorrect.

Our road on the 25th led gradually down hill as far as Shui-chai. From here the descent is down a narrow gorge with precipitous crags rising on each side. The path is zigzagged or it would be impossible for animals. Finally a bit of more gradual down-hill along the hillside brings one to the Mekong which is crossed by another of the iron-chain suspension bridges, the chains on the right bank being fastened round short pillars of natural rock cut out of the hillside.

133 The river averages from 80 to 100 yards in width, flowing with a strong current which renders it quite unnavigable. It runs between wall-like hills which rise almost sheer for 1,500 or 2000 feet and then slope more gradually back to the tops of the ranges. There is absolutely no level ground in the valley. This is characteristic of this river during its course through Yün-nan. I have subsequently seen it in several places and have found it much the same everywhere. The elevation at the bridge I made 3,900 feet, 1,700 feet higher than that of the Salween. After crossing, a very stiff ascent brought us to the long narrow village of
•527 Sha-yang. It was the Chinese New Year's Eve, and every house had a young fir tree stuck up in front of the door. This is, I believe, the universal custom in Yün-nan, but it does not seem to obtain in eastern China.

New Year's Day is the great holiday of the Chinese year. It occurs during the months of January or February, but not on any fixed date in our calendar, for the length of the Chinese year does not correspond with ours. They have twelve months, six of them of thirty days and six of twenty-nine days, making 354 days in all. So to make it come right with the sun they have to reckon one of the months twice over every three years. The same system of an intercalary month is used in Burma, but the Burmese calendar does not correspond in other respects with that of the Chinese.

On New Year's Day all shops are shut and no business of any sort is done. The people all put on their best clothes, often hired from a pawnshop for the occasion, and

5: Davies G-5 (1894-1900) 1909 AF16 Southwest China AF16

go out and pay visits to their friends. Spending the day paying calls does not sound very lively, but the Chinese are an extraordinarily sociable people and find great amusement in going to their neighbours' houses to talk and drink tea. Most people keep up the holiday for a few days, and there is not much business done for a fortnight after the New Year. It is quite contrary to Chinese custom to travel on New Year's Day, but both on this and subsequent occasions I found no difficulty in getting my Chinese followers to march. They were away from their own homes and had no friends in the place, so had no particular desire to stay and keep the New Year among strangers.

Our march on the 26th was as usual a hilly one. It began with an ascent of 3,300 feet and a descent of 2,300 feet. After that another spur of 600 feet had to be crossed into the plain of Yung-p'ing Hsien. The first village reached is Ch'ü-tung, which contains about 600 houses inhabited chiefly by Panthays. The inn here was an exceptionally good one, kept by a lady who had originally been Chinese, but having the bad luck in her youth to be in some town captured by the rebels, had been forcibly converted to Mahommedanism and married to a Panthay. This incident did not seem to have affected her cheerfulness. The Chinese very soon resign themselves to circumstances. Certainly in this case it had happened twenty-five or thirty years ago, so she had had time to get over it.

The plain of Yung-p'ing only measures some four miles by two. The main road does not pass through the town, which, though the residence of the official, is a smaller place than Ch'ü-tung. On this march the snow-capped range of mountains near Ta-li Fu was visible for the first time.

The next four days took us from Sha-yang to Yang-pi, over a country in which there is absolutely no level ground. Sha-sung-shao, a little village among pine forests, was our sleeping place on the first day. On the 28th we crossed the range which divides the Mekong from the Yang-pi river at a height a little over 8000 feet and descended to Huang-lien-p'u, which is built on a steep hillside shut in closely by hills on all sides. It contains a very good *hsing-t'ai* or Government rest-house, where we slept.

5: Davies G-5 (1894-1900) 1909 AF16 Southwest China AF16

the respectable inhabitants are generally friendly and even cordial. It is true that beneath this there is in the minds of the Chinese a vein of suspicion, for it is difficult for a Chinaman to look on a European as the same kind of being as himself. But I do not believe that the bad feeling which exists in some of the more anti-foreign places is directed against him because he is a missionary, but because he is a European. The Chinese are not a race with any deep religious feeling, and are quite ready to let men follow whatever religion they please, but disinterestedness is rare among them and they consequently cannot understand men coming out to teach a new religion without any ulterior object. It is difficult for them to believe that it is not some insidious design of foreign governments to introduce western customs.

In the province of Yün-nan no great progress has so far been made in making converts, and they say the Yün-nanese are more difficult to convert than the people of other provinces. Moreover the English missionaries are generally very careful as to whom they allow to be baptized, and make it a rule to accept no man as a convert without a considerable period of probation. Whether their success in their own work be great or small, I believe that English missionaries, simply by living in the country, do a great deal to raise the character of Europeans in the estimation of the Chinese. To the Chinaman in his natural state, the European is thought of as an outer barbarian of grotesque appearance, scarcely belonging to the human race at all. An enormous majority of the Chinese have never seen any Europeans but missionaries, and on them therefore falls the task of trying to dispel these ideas. They wear Chinese dress and conform as far as possible to Chinese customs, so that in course of time the Chinese begin to feel that they are not an entirely different race of beings from themselves. Certainly I have found the people more civil and less inquisitive in places where there are missionaries than in places where there are none.

During my stay in Ta-li the curious festival called the Yin-ch'un was held. This ceremony is performed annually in Yün-nan about the time of the Chinese New Year. It consists in carrying an earthen representation of a man and

6: Davies G-5 (1894-1900) 1909 AF16 Southwest China AF16

527 of a buffalo round the principal streets of the town for two or three hours. Inside the buffalo and the man are twelve little buffaloes and twelve little men, or should the year contain thirteen months, as it sometimes does, there are thirteen of them. The next day the two images are broken, and the little buffaloes and little men are taken out and one of each is presented to the principal officials and other leading men of the place, who have to make a money present in return. This ceremony appears to be a representation of the birth of the New Year. The particular colour that the man and the buffalo are to be painted each year is communicated officially from Peking.

132 The amount of snow to be found on the Ta-li mountains is a subject on which former travellers have differed, so I made enquiries about it. Mr Smith told me that the snow on the range is only visible from below during the winter months, but that in the deep ravines and crevices near the top of the range it is to be found all the year round, and it is brought down and sold in the town to cool water with in the hot weather. A little snow occasionally falls in the Ta-li plain, but it never lies long.

S.W. China AF16

This tribe lives on both banks of the Gold River between my Romi Tschanggu and Wa se kou, the place where the Ta tsien lu River flows into the /218/ Kin tschuan - Tung ho which the Ta tsien lu Tibetans there call rDyarong mutschü. The Yü tung people (Tibetan: Godong) are under the rule of their own hereditary prince and speak a language that neither Chinese nor Tibetans nor people from Kin tschuan understand, and that is supposed to have similarity only with the language of Bawang, the next kingdom above Romi Tschanggu. The inhabitants are farmers and are probably already related to the Lolo of Ning yüan fu, whose language, however, has a certain relationship with Tibetan. Each year in the eleventh Chinese month they celebrate a large folk festival during which they light fires on all the mountains, amid great shouting. The festival is supposed to free the country from a dreadful snake god. In former times - so the natives tell - there lived a large snake among them in a cave, to which each year a human being had to be offered as sacrifice. Each family in turn was obliged to throw one of its members to the snake. Once fate struck a smith, but he tossed a large piece of white-hot iron into the cave. The snake snapped at it, devoured it and burned up miserably. Its petrified image is still shown near the river. The neighbors of the Godong are amazed at the strange way in which these people carry burdens. Even loads up to 100 pounds that are meant to be carried on one's back they carry fastened to a band on their forehead.

101 [197] [52] [73] [48]

On the left bank of the Tung River toward the south are the territories of the Leng pien and beyond that of the Schen pien tu se. However, today these are almost completely swallowed up by the great flood of Chinese.

/218/ On June 13, I attempted to follow the Great Gold River upstream, but was deterred because of all-too precipitous places, in view of my unskillful horses of the steppes, and decided to get to the next mandarin city of Mu gung ting by way of the so-called da lu, the main highway and military road. The journey thither was supposed to take only three days. From Mu gung ting a road that was not dangerous was said to lead over the mountains to the upper part of the Gold River. However, already the crossing of the suspension

491

of troops to defend the city against a resolute opponent. Sung pan ting has hardly more than 1,500 settled families. Their cloak of protection is therefore far too wide. Inasmuch as there are few Chinese farmers in the vicinity, the city is not required to provide shelter for many refugees in case of a war. This was also a reason why in the 1860s when the Tai ping rebellion weakened the government and the Tibetans and Mohammedans therefore thought their hour of emancipation had come, the city could not offer any resistance against the Tibetan attackers, and rapidly fell. For three years the city, as well as the entire territory up to Nan ping and down to Lung ngan fu and as far as Mao tschou, was ruled by the native aristocrats and the Chinese were so oppressed that to this day they celebrate the anniversary of their emancipation. The day happened to occur during my visit. The Mohammedans also take part in the pleasures of this festival, for they, too, suffered very much under the Tibetans. The latter wanted to re-establish the old kingdom of the Nessedin (Nasding) rgyalbo. The memory of this Tibetan king is still very vivid here.

The relationship between Chinese and Mohammedans who constitute about half the population of the city, is relatively very good, and that is why there are two Mohammedan prayer halls inside the city wall; and a large mosque has been preserved from ancient times not far from the city across the left bank of the Min ho. As far as other buildings are concerned, we need mention only the old Chen tai yamen in the northern part of the city and the government building of the Ting on a rock terrace in the west. On the periphery of the city are a few lamaistic (Saskya-, Nima-) monasteries. The dwellings /277/ are largely made of wood and many of them are three-storied. A whole section of the city looked very new because just three years before there had been a large fire here. The shops are found along the main street, as everywhere in China. Here one always sees a few Tibetans buying luxury items. The Tibetan population which visits Sung pan ting gives the city a distinctive appearance. The streets are crowded with Ngolok who come riding into the gates on horseback, and above all with hordes of poorly-dressed Bo lo tse or Po lo (Tibetan: Kredyang), men and a surprising number of young women, on foot, and mostly barefoot, clothed only in a coarse, blackish-brown hairy shirt, often without a hat, without any kind of